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In The Texas Medical Center  
Houston, Texas 77030

May 5, 1982

Dr. Henry Swan  
Department of Surgery  
University of Colorado  
Denver, Colorado

Dear Henry:

Please accept my most sincere congratulations on the establishment of the Henry Swan Visiting Professorship. This is a nice recognition for the many contributions which you have made to surgical science.

I can recall the early days when most of us were scrambling around trying to operate inside the human heart. The reports which came out of your department were thrilling. The successful use of hypothermia with circulatory arrest stands as a milestone in open heart surgery. As you may recall, I became an early opponent of this technique.

My opposition began when I attempted to close a ventricular atrial communication through the right atrium during circulatory arrest. The patient developed a coronary air embolism when her temperature was 80° and we could never resuscitate her. I over-reacted to this experience as you may recall and jokingly established the AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF HYPOTHERMIA. With the advent of the pump oxygenator for extracorporeal circulation and total cardiopulmonary bypass, it became evident that the combination of that technique with hypothermia could extend the value of the pump.

You will be interested to know that today I am a firm proponent of hypothermic circulatory arrest for open repair of aortic arch aneurysms. Sometimes it causes me to feel sheepish to know how you and I argued about hypothermia. Do you recall the time at a symposium when Dr. Blalock asked me if I thought that hypothermia was obsolete and I made the remark that in my opinion it was not obsolete, but it was not very fashionable. In fact, I said it was very much like the double-breasted suit. In the entire audience there were only two men wearing doubled-breasted suits, yourself and Dr. Valdoni from Rome!

Much has happened since that time. I have always admired you for your courage and intrepidity. Your ability to take things from the laboratory to the operating room has inspired many of us in the era of progress. I join your many friends and admirers on this occasion.

With warm personal regards, I remain

Sincerely yours,



Denton A. Cooley, M.D.